

## State Plumbing Apprenticeship Advisory Committee Minutes

Wednesday, March 20, 2013

Madison Area Technical College  
2125 Commercial Ave  
Madison, WI 53704

### DRAFT MINUTES

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Employer/Organization</b>
Breitlow, Steve	UA Plumbers Local 75
Brenner, Joseph	J.F. Ahern Company
Busch, Michael	UA Plumbers Local 75
Cartagena, Alaina	UA Plumbers Local 75
Clark, Roger	Plumbers Local 118
De Young, Carol	Countryside Plumbing & Heating, Inc.
House, Mike	UA Plumbers Local 75
Huiting, Mark	Bassett Mechanical, Inc.
Ignatowski, Chris	Plumbers & Fitters Local 434
Jones, David	Dave Jones Inc.
Morgan, Karen	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Pertzborn, Robert	H.J. Pertzborn Plumbing & Fire Protection
Rozga, Bill	Rozga Plumbing & Heating Corporation
Schedler, Keith	Don's Plumbing Service, Inc.
Sinclair, Jr., Willie	UA Plumbers Local 75

<b>Members Absent</b>	<b>Employer/Organization</b>
Callies, Dan	Oak Creek Plumbing
Flory, Tyler	Plumbers & Fitters Local 434
Scherer, Michael	Ideal Plumbing & Heating

<b>Consultants &amp; Guests</b>	<b>Employer/Organization</b>
Ahmad, Hafeezah	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Belanger, Wayne	Associated Builders and Contractors
Cook, Jim	Milwaukee Area Technical College
Destree, Sandy	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Gerhardt, Gail	MCA
Hamilton, Scott	ASSE International
Johnson, Allan	Plumbers Local 118
Korn, Gary	UA Local 434
Krause, Katie	MCA
Nielson, Julie	Plumbers Local 118
Penno, Timothy	Madison Assoc. of Plumbing Contractors
Smith, Owen	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Walsh, Julie	Madison Assoc. of Plumbing Contractors
Wenger, Scott	UA Local 400
Wood, Marge	Wisconsin Technical College System
Zastrow, Wesley	Plumbers Local 75

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am by Dave Jones Committee Co-chair, in conformity with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law.
2. A roll call was conducted, and a member contact information confirmation sign-in sheet was circulated.
3. The minutes of September 21, 2012 meeting were reviewed and approved.

#### **4. Old Business**

##### **a. Roster Updates**

- New member Bill Rozga introduced himself. Bill Rozga replaced Bob Riebrich as the representative from Associated Builders & Contractors.
- Owen Smith from the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards (BAS) reported that the committee needs three more employer members to replace former members Steve Jelinski, Dave Karlsen, and Louis Dennee. Employer members are nominated by contractor associations, so Owen recommended that one new member each be nominated by Plumbing, Heating, Cooling Contractors (PHCC); Plumbing Contractors Association of Southeastern Wisconsin; and Mechanical Associates of Wisconsin. Representatives of those associations agreed to recruit a new member before the next meeting.

##### **b. Progress of Plumbing Review Course**

- Owen Smith (BAS) asked for feedback from members and consultants as to how the plumbing review course is progressing and whether it helps. Members Chris Ignatowski, Bill Rozga and Bob Pertzborn stated that their organizations received positive feedback on the course from instructors and apprentices.
- Karen Morgan (BAS) asked the committee whether it wanted to create a policy to address apprentices who do not pass the course. The state committee lacks a policy, so the matter is at the discretion of local committees. Currently, if an apprentice takes the review course, the apprentice can take the license exam, regardless of performance on the review course. Members stated a policy was not needed.
- Marge Wood (WTCS) reported that 60 of 80 participants passed John Kollman's online Plumbing Review Course, which was set up so apprentices who completed the course passed the course. The 20 participants who did not complete the course were grouped in a composite measure of "unsatisfactory." Of those participants six have since passed the licensure exam; nine were not in the Dept. of Safety and Professional Services' database, which infers that they did not pass the licensure exam; and three were journey workers with expired licenses. Carol De Young stated that she would like to share that information with contractors to show that the course is a worthwhile investment.

- Marge Wood stated that the plumbing instructors believe the review course adds value to the apprenticeship program but should not be mandatory. She added that if members want to evaluate the effectiveness of the course, it would necessary to compare the licensure exam results of apprentices who completed the review course with the licensure exam results of apprentices who did not take the review course.

**c. Implementation of Plumbing Review Course at Additional Technical Colleges**

- Marge Wood reported that the Plumbing Review Course is also available online at Northeast Wisconsin and Fox Valley Technical Colleges. Madison Area Technical College is offering the course in hybrid format, which includes online content and three in-person class sessions.

**d. SAGE Grant Update**

- Owen Smith reported that BAS hired Palle Pedersen as the new SAGE Grant Coordinator. Palle replaces Bill Goff, who accepted a permanent position with the Dept. of Administration. Owen also reported that BAS is processing reimbursement requests from several technical colleges for supplement solar water heating supplies, purchased to supplement the new green plumbing curriculum.
- Marge Wood reported that several technical colleges received damaged shipments of solar water heating supplies. Until the issue is resolved, those technical colleges might have to postpone invoicing the SAGE grant for reimbursement.

**e. Implementation of Local Standards**

- Karen Morgan reminded members who represent local committees to work with their Apprenticeship Training Representative to update and implement their local standards, and submit them to BAS for review and approval. Members reported that Marshfield and Central Wisconsin JACs implemented their local standards Monday night.

**f. Re-Distributing Hours for Unpaid Related Instruction**

- During the March 12, 2012, meeting, members expressed concern over the distribution of hours in Unpaid Related Instruction, and discussed the hours should be redistributed without changing the overall hours. Members agreed to allow local committees to distribute hours as needed. At this meeting, Owen Smith asked members how the process was going and whether any further discussion was needed. Members affirmed their previous decision, and no further discussion occurred.

## **5. New Business**

**a. Night School Class**

- Al Johnson of Plumbers Local 118 suggested adding a night school class to address the green changes in the plumbing code in 2015, which will be addressed in day school, too. By offering the material in both night and day schools, the topic will be reinforced over the five-year program, which might not occur if the topics were in day school only due to scheduling. Karen added that this topic could also be added to the 54-hour course. BAS will monitor the development and release of the code revisions.

#### **b. Questions from Members**

- Members inquired into BAS policy for apprentices who were cancelled due to lack of work before the Paid Related Instruction hours were increased. The additional hours must be completed by the apprentice, but cause their related instruction to be incomplete, requiring the apprentices to be under direct supervision. This has made employers reluctant to hire fourth and fifth-year apprentices who must complete the additional hours because of the additional cost of a journey worker supervisor. BAS had three policy options: require the apprentices to be under direct supervision; waive the direct supervision requirement for this cohort while they take the required courses; or waive the new requirement under a new contract. Members agreed that apprentices should not be required to be under direct supervision if they completed their Paid Related Instruction prior to being cancelled due to lack of work and prior to the implementation of the additional 72 hours of green awareness curriculum. Karen Morgan stated that BAS will proceed on a case-by-case basis.
- Members inquired into the reason for the apprentice administration fee. Karen Morgan explained that local committees are required by law to keep apprentice records. Employers who participate in the training trust are charged an administrative fee as part of the dues. Employers who do not pay into the training trust are charged a separate fee for administration of records.
- Al Johnson inquired whether the plumbing curriculum will be reviewed similar to how the Steamfitter curriculum was reviewed. Karen Morgan explained that it would not, because the Steamfitter curriculum is proprietary, or owned by the International, whereas the Plumbing curriculum is owned by the State of Wisconsin. However, the Plumbing curriculum has been reviewed for technical skill attainment. The Steamfitter curriculum will be reviewed to lessen the welding focus to make the program more applicable to power plants.

#### **6. WTCS Update**

- a. Marge Wood distributed a handout, "WTCS Plumbing Core Apprentice Related Instruction (PRI): Aligned Model Curriculum with sequential course numbers and descriptive titles." The plumbing instructors will move the plumbing applications night school course into an online format.
- b. Marge inquired about the future of Paid Related Instruction at Blackhawk Technical College. Wayne Belanger stated that Associated Builders & Contractors will work with Blackhawk to try to maintain a class, but he believes maintaining the class is unlikely. Karen Morgan stated that BAS would allow apprentices to transfer from Blackhawk to Madison Area Technical College, if needed.

#### **7. Review Plumbing Program Participants, current and historical**

- a. Four-hundred twenty eight (428) apprentices are currently enrolled in the plumbing apprenticeship program, which is the lowest point in a gradual decline since 2008, but only slightly lower than the 456 apprentices enrolled in October 2012.
- b. Owen Smith presented annual apprentice and employer totals from 2000 – March 19, 2013. The historical apprentice totals differ slightly from the apprentice totals distributed earlier because the historical totals come from a more powerful software program that

can process (count) the totals from the actual contract date; the older program processed the totals from the date the data was entered.

- c. Owen Smith shared the Bureau will soon have even more advanced reporting capabilities, and asked members whether different data or presentations of existing data would be helpful in making decisions.
  - Bill Rozga asked whether BAS could provide data on the reasons for apprentice cancellations. Karen Morgan stated that cancellation data is available on the BAS website, but the data do not include cancellation reasons. In the Construction sector, the majority of cancellations (70-80%) occur in the probationary period, which is healthy because the employer and apprentice are exploring whether they fit well together. However, sometimes cancellation rates can be misleading, especially during a recession, because employers downsize and move apprentices in other positions.

**8. The next meeting** will be October 9, 2013, at 10:00 a.m. at the Wisconsin Technical College System Foundation in Waunakee, WI.

## **9. Follow-up Issues**

As a result of the discussions above, the following will occur:

1. BAS will email Marge Wood's data to all members, and cross reference the 20 participants who did not complete the course with its database to determine whether the participants are or had been apprentices.
2. BAS will analyze and compare current cancellation rates with pre-recession cancellation rates for the fall meeting.